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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

away from the bogs. His art lacks mass and weight, perhaps—it is a white-sailed sloop racing over the deep waters of his theme, not a heavy brig or a steel freighter, veterans of storms. The democracy it expresses is the democracy of a sensitive aristocrat who feels through imagination, not that of a hard man of the people who feels through knowledge. There is not, in Mr. Bynner, such richness and fullness of experience of life as in Whitman or Mark Twain, or that more modern democrat Edgar Lee Masters; and thus his poem lacks the breadth and bigness of the works of these.

But it has great beauty, at times a lyric ecstasy, a note clear, fine, pure. It not only achieves with felicity its spiritual motive, but incidentally sketches with light strokes a few living figures—the steel-worker, the two brothers, and even Celia, who, though dimmed by certain speeches, is at times vivid in superlative loveliness.

Having printed eight pages of this poem last April, we will pause now merely for a salutation:

The wind of death is a bright kiss
Upon the lips
Of every immigrant, as upon yours and mine—
Theirs is the stinging brine
And sun and open sea,
And theirs the arching sky, eternity.

H. M.

Rivers to the Sea, by Sara Teasdale. Macmillan.

Who can review a book like this? It would be like analyzing the flowers of June, for Mrs. Filsinger's lyrics have the clarity, the precision, the grace and fragrance of flowers.

They seem absolutely simple and sincere, the utterance of a heart too full to hold its emotion—the real lyric cry. That is, the score or more best of them have this beauty, and the best are almost invariably in two or three tetrameter quatrains with alternate rhymes—the simplest tune in the language. In other measures she rarely rises to her highest level, although *Broadway* and *The Lights of New York* are good sonnets, and *Spring in War Time* uses admirably a plaintive little refrain. In free verse she is least at home—it is a pity she tries it.

The poems have a girlish delicacy, and all of them express an ardent love of life. They are chiefly love songs, and love songs of nature and the town—keen emotions of joy or wistful longing vividly expressed. But it seems futile to talk about them when they illustrate themselves so much more briefly and happily. We would like to quote seven or eight, but must content ourselves with these two:

APRIL

The roofs are shining from the rain,
The sparrows twitter as they fly,
And with a windy April grace
The little clouds go by.

Yet the back-yards are bare and brown
With only one unchanging tree—
I could not be so sure of Spring
Save that it sings in me.

COME

Come, when the pale moon like a petal
Floats in the pearly dusk of spring,

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Come with arms outstretched to take me,
Come with lips pursed up to cling.

Come, for life is a frail moth flying
Caught in the web of the years that pass,
And soon we two, so warm and eager
Will be as the gray stones in the grass.

At least a dozen other songs are as perfect as these—
Longing, Debt, Joy, Morning, Dusk in War Time—too
many to mention. So let us end with this quatrain, *Swallow
Flight*, because it expresses with such rare precision this poet's
temperament:

I love my hour of wind and light
I love men's faces and their eyes,
I love my spirit's veering flight
Like swallows under evening skies.

H. M.

The Factories with Other Lyrics, by Margaret Widdemer.
John C. Winston Co.

Miss Widdemer has a motive and a message. Certain tyrannies of modern society—child-labor, prostitution, war, over-worked poverty—are an anguish in her heart, and her wrath flames out in the *Poems of Now*; achieving in one or two, especially *Teresina's Face*, the high beauty of true lyric passion, and in others, like *The Beggars* and *A Modern Woman to Her Lover*, the less rare beauty of more consciously studied rhythmic statement. Such poems, being the intense expression of an individual woman's emotion, speak for all womanly women, utter their pity and wrath, their increasing power against wrongs new and old.